

WINTER 2021 Healthy Together

1-800-562-4620 • WWW.OHPCC.ORG

Is SAD Darkening Your Mood?

When winter arrives, do you get into a gloomy mood? Do you crave starchy foods? Does your energy level get lower? If the new season seems to affect you this way, then you might have SAD.

SAD stands for seasonal affective disorder, a form of depression. In the United States, SAD may affect between 4 and 6 percent of people, and a milder form of SAD may affect up to 20 percent. Women are more likely than men to get SAD.

Dark Moods and Other Symptoms

SAD shares common symptoms with major depression, such as feeling hopeless and having trouble concentrating.

People with SAD also tend to have other symptoms. These include:

- Overeating
- Weight gain
- Lack of energy
- Tendency to oversleep

**We are here to help
any day, any time.**

24/7 NURSE ADVICE LINE

1-800-562-4620

**Call ANY TIME you
want to talk to
a nurse.**

Researchers are not exactly certain what causes SAD. But many believe a disrupted “biological clock” caused by seasonal changes may be to blame. Limited daylight during the fall and winter months affects the body in many ways that could contribute to SAD.

Ways to Lift Your Mood

There is a bright side! There are ways you can treat SAD. Here are some things to try:

- **Let as much natural light as possible into your home or office.** Keep the blinds open and sit close to windows.
- **Be more active.** Exercise can boost endorphins and help relieve SAD symptoms.
- **Spend time with others—even if you have to do it virtually.** It may be harder to be social when you are depressed, but being alone can make you feel worse. Improve your mood by reaching out as much as you can.
- **Get outside when possible.** Even if it is cold or cloudy, the light can still benefit you.
- **Ask your health care provider about light therapy.** Being exposed to a bright white light every day may help make up for the lack of sunlight and alter the brain chemicals that regulate your mood.



Having a Happy Holiday With Diabetes

Holidays are supposed to be joyous. But in reality, they can be hazardous for people with diabetes. Sweets abound, and meals are often more bountiful than any of us need. But, wait! We do not want to add to your holiday stress. That is why we have tips that can help you move merrily through the season.

- **Embrace moderation.** Most people with diabetes can work a sweet treat or two into their meal plan. So, go ahead and enjoy a small piece of your favorite candy or sweet food—just make sure it fits into your carb count for the day. Check nutrition labels for carbohydrate information. Be sure to note the serving size.
- **Choose sweets carefully.** Fiber helps stabilize your blood sugar. Choosing fiber-rich but tasty desserts like citrus fruits and berries can help you maintain glucose control. You can also satisfy your sweet tooth by trying a sweet potato with cinnamon sprinkled on top.
- **Say no to temptation.** If you like to have treats around for guests, wait to buy them until the day you will be having company. To avoid overeating these treats, never buy your favorite kind.

- **Plan ahead for activity.** Yes, we know you already have too much on your plate during the holidays. But it is important to take care of yourself, too. If you put exercise on your list, it will be easier to plan time in your schedule to do it.
- **Acknowledge your feelings.** When you have diabetes, feeling sad or down during the holidays is common because it can emphasize that your life is different. If you are feeling overwhelmed, ask your health care provider for help.

Look to the New Year

After the holidays, take stock of your year and then move on to the next. If you were not active enough or you gained weight over the holidays, do not beat yourself up about it. Let the new year begin with renewed hope. And be sure to get active again. It really can help you control your blood sugar and live well.

+ health briefs

Move It

Exercise can boost your mood and relieve depression. When it is cold, wear a hat, scarf, gloves and warm layers. Or, opt for indoor exercise by dancing at home to upbeat music.



Get Vaccinated

Not sure what vaccines you need to stay well? Visit the CDC's vaccine website at www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultImmSched. Just answer a few quick questions to get personalized results.



Give Thanks

Research shows that being thankful can reduce stress. So, if the holidays have you frazzled, try changing your focus. Think instead about the family and friends you are grateful to be with.



Do Not Put Off These Cancer Screenings

The following screenings are suggested by the American Cancer Society.

CANCER TYPE	SEX	SCREENING TEST	HOW OFTEN
BREAST	F	Mammogram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every year, starting at age 45 until age 54 • Every other year for ages 55 and older
CERVICAL	F	Primary HPV test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every 5 years, starting at age 25 until age 65 • Screening may also be done with either a co-test (Pap test with an HPV test) every 5 years or a Pap test alone every 3 years
COLORECTAL (One of these tests will be done)	M/F	Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT)	Every year, starting at age 45
		Fecal immunochemical test (FIT)	Every year, starting at age 45
		Stool DNA test	Every 3 years, starting at age 45
		Flexible sigmoidoscopy	Every 5 years, starting at age 45
		Virtual colonoscopy	Every 5 years, starting at age 45
		Colonoscopy	Every 10 years, starting at age 45
PROSTATE	M	Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men at high risk should ask about this test starting at age 45 • Men ages 50 and older should talk about the benefits of this test with their providers

COVID Corner

We all want to be with our loved ones during the holidays. But because of COVID, get-togethers may not be safe for everyone this year. Here is what you need to know.

People who should not attend in-person celebrations:

- Those with or exposed to COVID-19
- Those at increased risk for severe illness
- Those who live or work with someone at increased risk of severe illness

If you are hosting a gathering:

- Outdoors is safer than indoors.
- Limit the number of people you invite.
- Provide masks and hand sanitizer or ask your guests to bring their own.

If you are attending a gathering:

- Outdoors is safer than indoors.
- Ask the host about what steps

will be taken to prevent spread of the virus.

- Bring your own mask (and an extra) and hand sanitizer. Do not share masks with other people.

During a celebration:

- Stay at least 6 feet away from people you do not live with.
- Avoid busy areas at the celebration like an eating area or the bathroom.
- Try not to shake hands, bump elbows or give hugs.
- Wear a mask at all times.
- Wash your hands often.

To cope with stress in a healthy way:

- Know where and how to get counseling or therapy if your stress becomes severe.
- Connect with others including friends, people you trust and community-based and faith-based organizations.

- Take care of your emotional health. Take breaks, meditate and avoid too much news coverage.
- Take care of your body. Stretch, breathe deeply, eat well-balanced meals, exercise, get plenty of sleep.
- Make time to unwind.

For more information and resources:

- <https://govstatus.egov.com>
- **OR-OHA-COVID-19**
- www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html





Oregon Health Plan Care Coordination
P.O. Box 2480
Tualatin, OR 97062

Ready to quit tobacco?

Call a Quit Coach 24 hours
a day, 7 days a week,
in 170+ languages:

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569)

Online:

www.quitnow.net/oregon

Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or any other health issues. Visit our Website at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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What to Know About Asthma and Smoking

More than 25 million Americans have asthma. There is no cure. But asthma can be controlled if you know how. Learning what causes asthma flare-ups is one of the first steps to staying healthy. And, one of the most common causes is tobacco smoke.

Staying away from smoke could save your life. Smoke can trigger asthma symptoms and make them much worse. It also can lead to more asthma flare-ups. And that can be serious. Each year, asthma kills more than 3,000 people in the U.S.

If you have asthma and you do not smoke, that is a good start. But your health may still be in danger. Breathing in other people's smoke, called secondhand smoke, is an asthma trigger too. In fact, it may even be a risk factor for asthma.

If women smoke while they are pregnant, their babies are more likely to get asthma. And kids who grow up with parents who smoke are also at a higher risk. The lungs of babies and children are not fully developed and are more easily harmed by secondhand smoke.

It is important to stay away from smoke, especially if you have asthma. That way, you can keep yourself and your loved ones healthy. How can you lower your asthma risks from smoke?

- If you smoke, take steps to quit. It may not be easy, but you can do it. Start by talking with your health care provider.

- While trying to quit, do not smoke indoors or in your car. This will lessen the amount of smoke you breathe in.
- If you live with a smoker, encourage them to stop.
- Avoid going to places where people are smoking.

